

EXHIBIT A

CLAIMS PENDING AS OF ENTRY OF THE AMENDMENT DATED AUGUST 30, 2001 FILED IN CONNECTION WITH U.S. PATENT APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 09/396,539

35. A method for producing a chimeric negative strand RNA virus, comprising culturing a host cell transfected with plasmid cDNAs containing a heterologous nucleotide sequence operatively linked to a binding site specific for an RNA-directed RNA polymerase of a negative strand RNA virus, wherein the host cell expresses a polymerase proteins, and recovering a chimeric virus from culture.

36. The method of Claim 35 wherein the host cell constitutively expresses the polymerase proteins.

37. A chimeric virus recovered from the method of Claim 35.

38. A method for producing a chimeric negative strand RNA virus, comprising culturing a host cell transfected with plasmid DNAs containing a heterologous nucleotide sequence operatively linked to a binding site specific for an RNA-directed RNA polymerase of a negative strand RNA virus, and with plasmid DNAs containing nucleotide sequences which encode an RNA polymerase proteins, and recovering a chimeric virus from culture.

39. The method of Claim 38 wherein the chimeric virus is influenza virus.

40. The method of Claim 39 wherein the heterologous RNA segment is derived from another strain of influenza virus.

41. A chimeric virus recovered from the method of Claim 39.

42. A method for producing a chimeric negative strand RNA virus comprising culturing a host cell transfected with plasmid cDNAs containing the nucleotide sequences encoding eight genomic segments from different strains of influenza virus, each of the segments comprising the reverse complement of an mRNA coding sequence for an RNA-directed RNA polymerase of a negative strand virus, wherein the host cell expresses an RNA polymerase protein, and recovering a chimeric virus from culture.

43. The method of Claim 42 wherein the host cell constitutively expresses the polymerase proteins.

44. A chimeric virus recovered from the method of Claim 42.

45. (New) A method of producing a chimeric negative strand RNA virus, comprising culturing a host cell transfected with plasmid cDNAs containing a heterologous nucleotide sequence comprising a sequence mutated from a wildtype sequence of the negative strand RNA virus, operatively linked to a binding site specific for an RNA-directed RNA polymerase of a negative strand RNA virus, wherein the host cell expresses a polymerase protein and recovering a chimeric virus from culture.

46. (New) The method of claim 45 wherein the sequence mutated is a site specific mutation.

47. (New) The method of claim 45 wherein the virus is influenza.